United Nations A/60/772/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
28 April 2006
English
Original: Spanish

Sixtieth session
Agenda item 112 (e)
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of 47 members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 26 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of the Secretary-General and, further to its communication submitting the candidacy of Nicaragua for the Human Rights Council, has the honour to transmit herewith the document on voluntary pledges and commitments made by the Government of Nicaragua to the protection and promotion of human rights (see annex).

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Annex to the note verbale dated 26 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Voluntary pledges and commitments made by Nicaragua to the protection and promotion of human rights

I. The promotion and protection of human rights by Nicaragua

The Human Rights Council was created by resolution 60/251 for the purpose of strengthening the United Nations human rights machinery, with the aim of ensuring effective enjoyment by all of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development. Nicaragua, as a founding Member of the United Nations loyal to the principles of the Organization, wishes to participate in the work of this important Human Rights Council from its beginnings and, drawing on its own national experience, to help achieve the major goals set by the United Nations, particularly as regards the strengthening of international peace and security, the eradication of poverty and the fostering of development, while striving at all times to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

II. Pledges and commitments made by Nicaragua to the protection and promotion of human rights at the national level

The Government of Nicaragua is committed to promoting, protecting and strengthening the human rights of the Nicaraguan people by improving their living conditions and carrying out policies and programmes based on their right to development.

- In keeping with that commitment, fighting corruption is the basic pillar of this Government's administration, as it is convinced that this scourge is a violation of the basic rights of persons and their dignity.
- The Nicaraguan Government has therefore established a number of legal and administrative norms and provisions with a view to guaranteeing the realization of human rights, particularly those relating to the vulnerable sectors of society, including children and adolescents, women, indigenous peoples, persons of African descent, migrants and persons with disabilities. Of particular interest to the Government of Nicaragua are the human and labour rights of migrant workers, a social issue that is also facing various other countries of the world.
- Strategic objectives designed to safeguard the human rights enshrined in the Political Constitution of the Republic have been incorporated into the National Development Plan, whose basic purpose is to improve the living conditions of the Nicaraguan population.
- The Plan contains a National Poverty Eradication Strategy, based on a social policy programme, which targets more than 60 Nicaraguan municipalities with the highest poverty index. The Plan also provides for coverage of the most urgent basic services, such as education, health, drinking water and sanitation, nutrition, housing and local employment in the social services sector and is

implemented jointly by the central Government, local governments and civil society.

- The Government of Nicaragua believes that the best social investment is an investment in human resources that will lead to the achievement of sustainable human development. The National Population Policy therefore covers all aspects of the demographic situation.

- As priority has been accorded to promoting human rights and educating the population about the Political Constitution, the Law on the Promotion of Human Rights and Education on the Political Constitution was adopted and disseminated in order to raise awareness among the Nicaraguan population of the full range of rights that belong to them, and of national and international protection mechanisms and how to contribute to them.

- Nicaraguans fully recognize that they belong to a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual nation. Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance are scourges that violate the human rights and fundamental freedoms of our nations and we are committed to eradicating them.

- Anti-terrorism is another task assumed by the Government of Nicaragua with a view to preserving human rights. At the national level, it has put in place the National Plan against Terrorism and Related Crimes, whose main objective is to adopt adequate domestic measures to strengthen cooperation among institutions with a view to preventing, combating and eliminating terrorism.

- In 1996, the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman was established by Act No. 212 as an independent entity subject to the Paris Principles. It has a legal personality of its own and functional and administrative autonomy that, coupled with the efforts of state institutions and civil society, helps to guarantee the security of persons and the human rights recognized in the Political Constitution of Nicaragua within the rule of law.

III. Pledges and commitments by Nicaragua to the protection and promotion of human rights at the international level

- Nicaragua is a State party to the major international human rights instruments, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

- It submits all its periodic reports to the human rights treaty monitoring bodies on a regular basis, in accordance with the commitments it undertook on becoming a State party to the respective instruments. It also honours its commitment to examine its situation in the light of the treaty provisions and

recognizes that certain monitoring bodies or committees are competent to admit individual communications.

- Nicaragua will support and cooperate to bring about the adoption of new international human rights instruments to address remaining gaps in the protection and promotion of human rights; it will, in particular, continue to work for the adoption of an optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and a comprehensive and integral international convention on the protection and promotion of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

- It also hopes that the Human Rights Council will adopt, at its first session and without delay, the draft legally binding normative instrument for the protection of all persons from enforced disappearances and the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples.

- Nicaragua attaches great importance to the work of the special reporters appointed by the Commission on Human Rights and hopes that the Council will renew their mandates. It undertakes to cooperate fully with all special human rights procedures.

- It volunteers to be one of the first countries to undergo a universal periodic review by the Human Rights Council and undertakes to implement such recommendations as the Council may formulate.

- As a member of the Human Rights Council, it will contribute to making the Council a forum for open and transparent dialogue among States, and for the sharing of experiences, progress and challenges faced by every country in the promotion and protection of human rights.